

PERSONAL PROPERTY TAX

TOWN OF ASHFORD

What is Taxable Personal Property?

Taxable personal property is tangible property other than real estate, as described in Sections 12-41 & 71 of the Connecticut General Statutes.

Personal property includes:

- unregistered motor vehicles (including trailers and campers),
- motor vehicles located in Connecticut but registered in another state,
- mobile manufactured homes not assessed as real estate,
- manufacturing machinery and equipment,
- business furniture and fixtures,
- farm machinery and tools,
- mechanics tools,
- electronic data processing equipment,
- telecommunication equipment,
- cables, conduits, pipes, and poles,
- business expensed supplies,
- leasehold improvements,
- other items such as billboards, video games and vending machines.

Who must file a personal property declaration?

All owners and lessees of personal property on October 1 or having personal property that may have been in several locations but was located in the Town of Ashford during the three months prior to October 1.

Leased, loaned or rented personal property must also be declared by the user or owner.

I already paid sales taxes on my property. Why do I have to pay personal property tax?

The sales tax is a state tax and the personal property tax is a local tax. Connecticut law has required owners of taxable personal property to

annually report property owned by them on October 1 to the municipal Assessor since 1949. The assessment is 70% of the market value

What is the deadline to file a personal property declaration?

The deadline for receipt by the Assessor is November 1. If November 1 occurs on a Saturday or Sunday, the deadline is extended to the next business day.

A filing extension can be obtained if the Assessor is notified prior to November 1.

What if I don't file a declaration?

In accordance with CT General Statute Sec. 12-42, the Assessor prepares a declaration using the best information available and adds a 25% non-filing penalty.

What if I don't receive a declaration in mail, am I still required to file?

Yes. It is the responsibility of the property owner (or lessee) to file a declaration. The Assessor's Office mails declarations by October 15th to all known owners of taxable personal property. If you do not receive a declaration form in the mail, one can be obtained from the Assessor's Office or on the town website, <https://ashfordtownhall.org/document-category/assessors-office/>.

Can I file my declaration online?

No. A fillable form is available on the Assessor's Documents page of the town website, <https://ashfordtownhall.org/document-category/assessors-office/>. It can be completed and printed for submission to the Assessor.

How does the assessor know if my declaration is accurate?

Connecticut law authorizes the assessor, or the assessor's designee, to perform an audit for up to three years, requiring the property owner to

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appear with accounting books, documents, federal tax returns, etc. for examination under oath in reference to their personal property. Any property discovered during an audit and not previously reported will be added along with a 25% penalty for its omission.

What if I buy or set up a business after October 1? Must I declare my personal property?

If you buy or set up a new business and have no personal property on October 1, you need not file a declaration until the next October 1.

I closed my business prior to October 1 but still received a declaration. Must I file?

Yes. Complete the "Affidavit of Business Closing or Sale of Business" on the 1st page of the declaration and return it to the Assessor. Do not ignore the declaration! If you do not return the declaration with this information, the assessor will assume that you are still in business but have failed to file. You will be assessed, penalized and taxed unless you return the form.

I closed my business after October 1. Can I receive a credit pro-rated personal property tax bill?

No. Unlike registered motor vehicles, there is no pro-ration of the tax. The account will be closed for the next October 1 Grand List.

Are there any tax breaks available to owners of personal property?

Yes. Certain full and partial exemptions may be available for manufacturing equipment, mechanics' tools, farming equipment and pollution control equipment. You must file the declaration by November 1 to receive the exemptions.

What if I disagree with the assessment?

You can appeal your assessment to the Board of Assessment Appeals. Appeal applications are available on the town's website or from the Assessor. They must be received by February 20. If you filed your declaration late or failed to file at all, you may still appeal your assessment, but a 25% penalty must still be applied.

HELPFUL FILING HINTS

First-time filer. The declaration may seem complicated or confusing. The form is designed to accommodate many different types of property. Read the instructions carefully.

Keep a list of your assets and receipts. Include gross acquisition cost prior to any trade-in value and dates of purchase. Update the list with new acquisitions and disposals.

Have an accountant? They may be able to prepare your declaration.

Be sure to sign and date your declaration. Keep a copy of your declarations and records declarations.

Maintain proof of the declaration submission. If the Assessor does not receive a copy of the declaration in the mail or receives it late, it is the taxpayer's responsibility to demonstrate it was mailed or submitted on time. Proof can include a Certificate of Mailing from the USPS, Certified or Registered Mail and a signature of delivery acceptance if sent by courier.

Call or email the Assessor's Office with questions. We are here to help. 860-487-4403, assessor@ashfordtownhall.org.